



2 THESSALONIANS

2 Thessalonians 1:1-5 – The Slaying Of Satan’s Superman

October 6, 2024

- “I frankly confess that the meaning of this (2 Thessalonians 2) completely escapes me.” - Augustine, City of God, 20.19

1. Background

A. When teaching the Bible, know when to whisper and when to shout.

- Paul’s purpose in this chapter is not to give a detailed end-times prophecy chart with boxes we can check off. It is to pastor a young, persecuted, and discouraged church in the City of Thessalonica. That truth, we can shout. Specific details of end-times prophecy, which are probably more our opinion than biblical truth, should be whispered.

B. Understand The Unit Of Thought

- This chapter is one unit of thought, not two, as seen in many Bibles.
 - i. **Verse 2 warns them about being led astray. Verse 15 tells them how to avoid being led astray.**

not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come.
2 Thessalonians 2:2 (ESV)

So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by our spoken word or by our letter. 2 Thessalonians 2:15 (ESV)

- ii. **Verse 2 tells us they were shaken and alarmed. In verses 16 and 17, Paul prays they will be comforted instead of shaken and alarmed.**

Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts...
2 Thessalonians 2:16–17 (ESV)

- iii. **Verses 1 to 12 describe unbelievers. Verses 13 to 17 describe believers.**

C. Outline Of The Chapter

- i. Crisis v.1-2
- ii. Correction v.3-12

iii. Comfort v.13-14

iv. Command v.15

v. Closing v.16-17

2. Crisis

Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we ask you, brothers, not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. 2 Thessalonians 2:1–2 (ESV)

A. What is the day of the Lord?

That day is the day of the Lord GOD of hosts, a day of vengeance, to avenge himself on his foes. The sword shall devour and be sated and drink its fill of their blood... Jeremiah 46:10 (ESV)

Alas for the day! For the day of the LORD is near, and as destruction from the Almighty it comes. Joel 1:15 (ESV)

While people are saying, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. 1 Thessalonians 5:3 (ESV)

B. They were worried the day of the Lord had come because of false teaching.

C. What was the source of the false teaching?

...either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. 2 Thessalonians 2:2 (ESV)

Let no one deceive you in any way... 2 Thessalonians 2:3 (ESV)

3. Correction

A. Some of this is hard to understand because we are walking into the middle of a conversation.

Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? 2 Thessalonians 2:5 (ESV)

B. Some of this is hard to understand because Paul did not put things in chronological order.

i. Future v.3-4

ii. Present v.5-7

iii. Future v.8-10

iv. Present v.11-12

...For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,... 2 Thessalonians 2:3 (ESV)

C. The Rebellion

But you must remember, beloved, the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. They said to you, "In the last time there will be scoffers, following their own ungodly passions." Jude 17–18 (ESV)

Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons,
1 Timothy 4:1 (ESV)

- "The" Rebellion is a mass rebellion against the government, law and order in society, and even God. It is a world of lawlessness with every man for himself.

D. The Man of Lawlessness

The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan...
2 Thessalonians 2:9 (ESV)

- The man of lawlessness means he is the embodiment of all lawlessness.
- This is Satan's Superman. He is the most satanically empowered person to walk the planet. He is also known as the antichrist, the closest to Satan in the flesh the world will ever see.

Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son. 1 John 2:22 (ESV)

Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour.
1 John 2:18 (ESV)

- There will be one great antichrist at the end of history (the man of lawlessness), but there will be many lesser antichrists earlier in history.

E. The Son of Destruction

Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,...
2 Thessalonians 2:3 (ESV)

- The son of destruction means the embodiment of all destruction.

F. The Man Who Claims To Be God

...who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God. 2 Thessalonians 2:4 (ESV)

i. He proclaims himself to be the only God.

ii. He takes his seat in the temple of God.

And the king shall do as he wills. He shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak astonishing things against the God of gods. He shall prosper till the indignation is accomplished; for what is decreed shall be done.

Daniel 11:36 (ESV)

- Antiochus Epiphanes IV 163 B.C.
- Roman General Pompey 63 B.C.
- Roman Emperor Caligula 40 A.D.
- The man of lawlessness's attempt to take God's place in the temple of God MAY be a description of his desire to take God's place in the world, not a literal act in a physical location.

3. Conclusion

And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming.

2 Thessalonians 2:8 (ESV)

Life Group Questions

1. **Read 2 Thessalonians 2.** Growing up, what were you taught in church about Jesus' return? Did this sermon challenge your thinking?
2. Kurt discussed the importance of knowing when to shout what the Bible says and when to whisper what we think it means. Why is this distinction important, especially when studying Jesus' return?
3. **Read 2 Thessalonians 2:1-2.** The Thessalonians were deceived about Jesus' return. Pastor Kurt shared two examples of people who were deceived about the timing of Jesus' return. Have you met someone deceived about the timing of Jesus' return? How can we avoid being deceived by end-times books and self-proclaimed prophecy gurus? (see 2 Thessalonians 2:15)
4. **Read 2 Thessalonians 2:3.** The man of lawlessness must come before Jesus returns. What will he be like? Why would he not be content with holding world political power but also want to be worshipped as the only god in the universe? What does this tell us about Satan's purposes?
5. **Read Ezekiel 28.** It is about the King of Tyre, who was a Satanically empowered leader like Hitler, Antiochus Epiphanes, the Roman Emperor Caligula, and many others. Verses 1 to 10 speak about the man who was King of Tyre. Verses 11 to 19 speak about Satan, who was behind him and empowered him. How do these verses help us understand the way Satan is at work through human leaders?
6. **Read 2 Thessalonians 2:8.** How does that verse provide hope when we think about the coming rebellion and the advent of the antichrist, Satan's Superman?